

In Re City of New York 2022-2023 Districting Commission Public Meeting to Vote on Proposed Districting Plan for City Council  
September 22nd, 2022

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CITY OF NEW YORK 2022-2023 DISTRICTING COMMISSION  
PUBLIC MEETING  
TO VOTE ON PROPOSED DISTRICTING PLAN  
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22 Reade Street  
New York, New York

DATE: September 22, 2022  
TIME: 11:01 a.m.

PUBLIC MEETING in the above-referenced matter, held at the above-mentioned time and location, before Sabrina Brown Stewart, a Notary Public of the State of New York.

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In Re City of New York 2022-2023 Districting Commission Public Meeting to Vote on Proposed Districting Plan for City Council  
September 22nd, 2022

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1 A P P E A R A N C E S:

2 COMMISSIONERS:

3 DENNIS M. WALCOTT, Chair

4 YOVAN SAMUEL COLLADO

5 HON. MARILYN D. GO

6 KEVIN JOHN HANRATTY

7 MARIA MATEO, ESQ.

8 JOSHUA SCHNEPS

9 LISA SORIN

10 MONSIGNOR KEVIN SULLIVAN

11 KAI-KI WONG

12 MAF MISBAH UDDIN

13 MICHAEL SCHNALL

14 KRISTEN JOHNSON

15 GREGORY W. KIRSCHENBAUM

16 MARC WURZEL

17 DR. DARRIN K. PORCHER

18

19 SENIOR STAFF:

20 DR. JOHN FLATEAU, Executive Director

21 GRACE PYUN, General Counsel

22 JOSEPH MALIGNO, Deputy Executive Director

23 ALI RASOULINEJAD, Chief of Staff

24 EDDIE BORGES, Communications Director

25 LATOYA BENJAMIN, Deputy Chief of Staff

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1 CHAIR WALCOTT: Good morning, all. It  
2 is a pleasure and honor to be here. It is  
3 now 11:01, and we want to start on time,  
4 and -- is Joseph around? So, Joseph can call  
5 the roll and then we'll take off from there.  
6 There's Joseph coming out right now.

7 Joseph.

8 MR. MALIGNO: Good morning.

9 CHAIR WALCOTT: Good morning, sir.

10 MR. MALIGNO: So, I will conduct the  
11 roll call for today, starting off with Dennis  
12 Walcott.

13 CHAIR WALCOTT: I am definitely  
14 present.

15 MR. MALIGNO: Kai-Ki Wong?

16 COMMISSIONER WONG: Present.

17 MR. MALIGNO: Marilyn Go?

18 (No response).

19 MR. MALIGNO: Kristen Johnson?

20 COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Present.

21 MR. MALIGNO: Maf Uddin?

22 COMMISSIONER UDDIN: Present.

23 MR. MALIGNO: Yovan Collado?

24 COMMISSIONER COLLADO: Present.

25 MR. MALIGNO: Lisa Sorin?

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1 CHAIR WALCOTT: She's finding a spot  
2 right now.

3 MR. MALIGNO: Marc Wurzel?

4 COMMISSIONER WURZEL: Present.

5 MR. MALIGNO: Kevin Hanratty?

6 COMMISSIONER HANRATTY: Present.

7 MR. MALIGNO: Maria Mateo?

8 COMMISSIONER MATEO: Present.

9 MR. MALIGNO: Joshua Schneps?

10 (No response).

11 MR. MALIGNO: Kevin Sullivan?

12 COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Present.

13 MR. MALIGNO: Gregory Kirschenbaum?

14 (No response).

15 MR. MALIGNO: Michael Schnall?

16 COMMISSIONER SCHNALL: Present,  
17 virtually.

18 MR. MALIGNO: Thank you.

19 Darrin Porcher?

20 COMMISSIONER PORCHER: Present,  
21 virtually. Thanks for starting on time.

22 MR. MALIGNO: And that is the roll call  
23 for today.

24 CHAIR WALCOTT: And thank you. And as  
25 others join us, we'll have them introduce

1           themselves to the audience and to the general  
2           public as well. And one of the things I'll  
3           talk about in several minutes, not at this  
4           moment, is the commitment of the group of  
5           commissioners who are sitting here and who  
6           are also part of our virtual world.

7                     And why I say that, because we have one  
8           of our commissioners who's sitting in a  
9           waiting room at the airport right now. And  
10          so, I know he's on a clock, so we don't want  
11          to be accused of having him miss his plane.

12                    So, Commissioner Schnall, we will  
13          adjust our program accordingly and give you  
14          the appropriate time in a little while,  
15          before you have to catch your transportation  
16          to your flight.

17                    And with that being said, I'd like to  
18          turn it over to our Executive Director, the  
19          outstanding Dr. John Flateau.

20                    Dr. Flateau.

21                    DR. FLATEAU: Thank you, Mr. Chair and  
22          Commission. Good morning, Commissioners.  
23          Good morning, New Yorkers.

24                    The Executive Director's Report is the  
25          item that I'm about to share with you. It is

1 a narrative of the district by district  
2 changes from the preliminary plan from  
3 July 15th to the proposed revised plan that  
4 is under consideration at this meeting today.  
5 This proposed revised plan is the collective  
6 work of your commissioners, and the bright  
7 and best staff of New York in the City of New  
8 York, and I would like to have our general  
9 audience at least give an acknowledgment to  
10 our commissioners and staff and all of this  
11 hard work --

12 (Applause).

13 DR. FLATEAU: -- in lightening speed,  
14 and with a whole range of new mandates that  
15 brought us to where we are right now. Let me  
16 go right to -- I'm going to, as I narrate  
17 each of the districts, let's start -- we'll  
18 go through each borough and each district,  
19 also, in lightening speed.

20 CHAIR WALCOTT: And Dr. Flateau, we've  
21 been joined by Judge Go.

22 So, Judge, welcome as well.

23 DR. FLATEAU: Julia, so we're going to  
24 start with Manhattan, District 1, at the  
25 south end of Manhattan.

1           This is where we are. According to the  
2           proposed revised plan, District 1 consists of  
3           Chinatown, Battery Park City, Tribeca, Soho,  
4           the Financial District, Governors Island and  
5           Greenwich Village. This district was  
6           overpopulated by nearly 12,000 persons. This  
7           district remains mostly intact with little  
8           changes, small changes.

9           We'll go heading north on the Island of  
10          Manhattan to District 2, one to two.  
11          District 2 consists of the Lower East Side,  
12          the East Village and parts of Kips Bay,  
13          Murray Hill and Gramercy Park. This district  
14          was slightly overpopulated by about 800  
15          people. The southern boundary of this  
16          district is now Houston Street and, clearly,  
17          on the east side to the East River. Then,  
18          we're moving north.

19          Chair, you may -- we have two  
20          commissioners.

21          CHAIR WALCOTT: Yep. I'm waiting for  
22          you to have your break for a second.

23          And we've been joined by Commissioner  
24          Sorin, Commissioner Schneps. And online, we  
25          also have Commissioner Kirschenbaum, so I

1 think we have a full house of commissioners,  
2 both in person as well as virtually.

3 DR. FLATEAU: So, we now are in  
4 District 3 in Manhattan on the west side.  
5 District 3 consists of Hell's Kitchen,  
6 West Village, West Soho, Hudson Yards, parts  
7 of Times Square, Flatiron and the Upper  
8 West Side. District 3 was overpopulated  
9 nearly 30,000 persons. There were clear  
10 testimony that Hell's Kitchen wanted to be  
11 kept intact, that was previously divided in  
12 the preliminary plan. And this particular  
13 objective was accomplished with the revised  
14 plan.

15 Moving north. Actually, to the east  
16 side, District 4. District 4 consists of  
17 Stuyvesant Town, Peter Cooper Village, Times  
18 Square, East Midtown and parts of the Upper  
19 East Side. District 4 was overpopulated by  
20 over 11,000 persons. So, then, some of these  
21 boundaries were adjusted to take account the  
22 requirement for population adjustments.

23 Moving north on the east side,  
24 District 5 in Manhattan. District 5 consists  
25 of parts of the Upper East Side, Yorkville

1 and Roosevelt Island. District 5 was  
2 overpopulated by over 8,000 persons. And it  
3 includes now Roosevelt Island, Upper  
4 East Side and Yorkville, particularly in  
5 response to changes to the preliminary plan,  
6 where there was a Queens/Manhattan crossover  
7 district, and that no longer exists in the  
8 revised plan.

9 District 6, Manhattan, Upper West Side.  
10 This district consists of Central Park,  
11 Clinton, Upper West Side and Lincoln Square.  
12 This district was overpopulated by over 8,000  
13 persons. The entirety of Central Park  
14 remains in this District 6 in the proposed  
15 revised plan.

16 Moving north on the west side,  
17 District 7. District 7 consists of Manhattan  
18 Valley, Morningside Heights, Hamilton  
19 Heights, Manhattanville, parts of Washington  
20 Heights. District 7 was underpopulated by  
21 over 7,000 persons. The district boundaries  
22 changed slightly to increase, to make up that  
23 deficit of populations. And on the north  
24 end, this area called the East 160s was added  
25 to District 7.

1 Moving to the east side, Manhattan,  
2 District 8. District 8 consists of  
3 El Barrio, Spanish East Harlem in Manhattan,  
4 and a portion of the Bronx, South Bronx, Mott  
5 Haven, Highbridge, Concourse, Longwood and  
6 Port Morris. This continues to be a  
7 Manhattan/Bronx cross-borough district.

8 District 9. District 9 consists of  
9 Harlem, Hamilton Heights and parts of  
10 Manhattanville. This district was  
11 overpopulated by almost 6,000 persons.  
12 Additionally, testimony from residents asked  
13 to ensure that Schomburg Plaza, Lakeview  
14 Apartments and Polo Grounds remain in  
15 District 9.

16 Going north to northernmost district in  
17 Manhattan, District 10. 10 consists of  
18 Washington Heights, Inwood and Marble Hill.  
19 District 10 was underpopulated by over 14,000  
20 persons. Parts of the southern boundary,  
21 therefore, was moved slightly lower in  
22 District 10.

23 We're moving on now to the next  
24 borough, the Bronx, Districts 11 through 18.

25 Maybe a little larger.

1                   So, District 11. District 11 consists  
2                   of parts of Kingsbridge, Riverdale,  
3                   North Riverdale, Spuyten Duyvil, Bedford  
4                   Park, Norwood, Woodlawn and Wakefield, as  
5                   well as Van Cortlandt Park. And this  
6                   district was over 7,000 underpopulated. And  
7                   slight border changes have made done to that  
8                   district to bring its population requirement  
9                   into focus.

10                   Next over is District 12. It consists  
11                   of Eastchester, Williamsbridge, Co-op City  
12                   and parts of Wakefield. There was a  
13                   population growth in District 12, and it was  
14                   actually overpopulated by 4,000 persons. So,  
15                   slight adjustments were made, and the lower  
16                   boundary is now along Arnow Avenue and  
17                   East Gun Hill Road, as well as Gun Hill  
18                   Houses are contained in the 12th.

19                   Now, District 13, which consists of  
20                   Pelham Bay, Pelham Gardens, Van Nest, Morris  
21                   Park, Bronxdale, Throgs Neck, Schuylerville,  
22                   Country Club and City Island. This district  
23                   was underpopulated by over 5,000 people. Van  
24                   Nest neighborhood was specifically asked to  
25                   be contained in District 13 in whole as a

1 neighborhood.

2 Next district is District 14. Where  
3 are you hiding?

4 CHAIR WALCOTT: (Indicating).

5 DR. FLATEAU: 14, West Bronx. 14,  
6 District 14, it contains parts of  
7 Kingsbridge, Kingsbridge Heights and  
8 University Heights. This district was  
9 underpopulated by more than 3,800 people, so  
10 adjustments were made to that district as  
11 well. And Kingsbridge Armory and surrounding  
12 business corridors of this landmark were  
13 restored to the district, 14th District.

14 Next, District 15. It consists of  
15 Bedford Park, Fordham, Mount Hope, Bathgate,  
16 Belmont, East Tremont, West Farms, Allerton  
17 and Olinville. This district was slightly  
18 overpopulated and minor adjustments to its  
19 borders.

20 District 16. It consists of Claremont,  
21 Concourse, Concourse Village, Highbridge,  
22 Morris Heights, Mount Eden and Morrisania.  
23 This district was slightly underpopulated by  
24 2,000 persons, and that district's boundaries  
25 were slightly adjusted to bring it into

1 compliance.

2 District 17, it consists of Concourse  
3 Village, Crotona Park East, East Tremont,  
4 Hunts Point, Longwood, Melrose, Morrisania,  
5 Port Morris, West Farms, North Brother Island  
6 and South Brother Island. And this district  
7 was slightly overpopulated by a thousand  
8 people. The neighborhood of Longwood,  
9 additionally, and Concourse Village were  
10 maintained, its entire complex in  
11 District 17.

12 District 18 consists of Soundview,  
13 Castle Hill, Parkchester, Clason Point and  
14 Harding Park. This was overpopulated by  
15 almost 9,000 people. Westchester Square and  
16 Soundview are also contained in this  
17 district, and border adjustments to bring  
18 population in compliance were made in that  
19 district.

20 We're now going to Queens, starting  
21 with District 19. This district consists of  
22 Auburndale, Bay Terrace, Bayside, Beechhurst,  
23 College Point, Douglaston, Flushing, Little  
24 Neck, Malba and Whitestone. This district  
25 was underpopulated by over 5,000 people,

1           therefore, minor adjustments to its  
2           boundaries were made. And the entirety of  
3           Bayside Village, BID, Business Improvement  
4           District, and a number of LIRR train stations  
5           in that area were included in that district.

6           The next district, District 20. It  
7           consists of Downtown Flushing, Murray Hill  
8           and Queensboro Hill. This was slightly  
9           underpopulated by about a thousand people.  
10          We were asked to also include Mitchell-Linden  
11          in that district, and other minor boundary  
12          adjustments were made.

13          The next district, 21. This consists  
14          of Corona, parts of Elmhurst, East Elmhurst  
15          and Jackson Heights. This district was  
16          underpopulated by approximately 1,700 people.  
17          It also retained LaGuardia Airport, Flushing  
18          Meadows Park within this district, as well as  
19          Lefrak City.

20          Next, District 22 in Queens. Ah, 22.  
21          22, this consists of Astoria, East Elmhurst,  
22          Jackson Heights and Woodside. This district  
23          was heavily underpopulated by over 13,000  
24          people, so adjustments were required to the  
25          borders of that district. Ravenswood,

1 Queensbridge districts are in that -- no,  
2 they're in 26. They came out of the  
3 preliminary plan. This District 22 also  
4 unifies the Steinway Street BID as requested  
5 as well. District 22.

6 District 23, Queens. Here we are.  
7 This district consists of Glen Oaks, Fresh  
8 Meadows and Bellerose. This was heavily  
9 underpopulated by over 12,000 persons. Its  
10 main boundaries are still intact, but  
11 population boundaries were made to adjust to  
12 bring it into compliance for required  
13 population.

14 Next, District 24. Consists of Kew  
15 Gardens Hills, Pomonok, Electchester, Fresh  
16 Meadows, Hillcrest, Jamaica Estates,  
17 Briarwood, Parkway Village, Jamaica Hills and  
18 Jamaica. This district was underpopulated by  
19 nearly 7,000 persons, so boundaries had to be  
20 made adjusted. We received testimony from  
21 Jewish residents in the area required -- or  
22 requested that Hillcrest remain intact within  
23 24, which it does.

24 District 25. District 25 consists of  
25 Elmhurst and Jackson Heights. This was

1 slightly underpopulated by 600 persons, and  
2 the boundaries were largely kept intact, and  
3 the 82nd Street BID was also unified in that  
4 district. It received, also, testimony from  
5 residents that they were -- south of Queens  
6 Boulevard requested to be moved into  
7 District 30, and that request was also  
8 accommodated.

9 The next district, Council District 26.  
10 It consists of Sunnyside, Woodside, Long  
11 Island City, Astoria and Dutch Kills. This  
12 district was originally overpopulated by  
13 almost 11,000 persons. This district is now  
14 based entirely in Queens, which was in the  
15 preliminary plan linked to Manhattan. That  
16 Manhattan/West Queens district no longer  
17 exists. It's been delinked.

18 District 27. District 27 consists of  
19 Cambria Heights, Hollis, Jamaica, St. Albans,  
20 Queens Village and Springfield Gardens. This  
21 district was very slightly underpopulated.  
22 This district now, as request -- from public  
23 testimony, requested unification of the  
24 Downtown Jamaica Central Business District,  
25 which is now in District 7, along with three

1 business improvement districts, all unified  
2 in one district.

3 District 28, it consists of Jamaica,  
4 Richmond Hill, Rochdale Village and  
5 South Ozone Park. District 28 was  
6 overpopulated by 10,000 persons. The  
7 boundaries of District 28 have been slightly  
8 revised moving close to the Merrick Boulevard  
9 corridor, as well Ozone Park is primarily  
10 united into this one district.

11 Next district is 29. It consists of  
12 Rego Park, Forest Hills, Kew Gardens and  
13 Richmond Hill. This district was  
14 underpopulated over 8,000 persons and  
15 required adjustments to its boundaries. It  
16 remains anchored with Forest Hills, Rego Park  
17 and Kew Gardens.

18 Next district is District 30.  
19 District 30, it consists of Glendale,  
20 Maspeth, Middle Village, Ridgewood, Woodhaven  
21 and Woodside. This district was  
22 underpopulated by almost 6,000 persons. In  
23 response to testimony, Elmhurst Triangle  
24 located -- was near Woodhaven Boulevard have  
25 been included in District 30.

1                   District 31. District 31, it consists  
2                   of Arverne, Brookville, Edgemere, Far  
3                   Rockaway, Laurelton, Rosedale and Springfield  
4                   Gardens. It was just slightly overpopulated  
5                   and retained most of its current district  
6                   lines. Additional testimony wanted the JFK  
7                   Airport kept in this district, 31.

8                   32. District -- it consists of Ozone  
9                   Park, Howard Beach and Woodhaven. It was  
10                  underpopulated by over 7,000 persons and  
11                  required some boundary adjustments.

12                  Now, we're moving to Brooklyn.

13                  CHAIR WALCOTT: Hey, John, I don't want  
14                  to shortchange the other boroughs, but I also  
15                  want to be conscious of our Commissioner  
16                  who's sitting in the airport. So, continue  
17                  on, but --

18                  DR. FLATEAU: Whenever I'm  
19                  interrupted --

20                  CHAIR WALCOTT: No. No. I don't --

21                  DR. FLATEAU: I can always come back.

22                  CHAIR WALCOTT: -- want to interrupt  
23                  the other boroughs because I think we should  
24                  have full context, so I just want to let you  
25                  know, if you could just speed it up a little.

1 DR. FLATEAU: Okay. Oh, you're  
2 shortchanging Brooklyn, huh?

3 CHAIR WALCOTT: Not at all, sir.

4 DR. FLATEAU: Hey, hey. Okay. Yes,  
5 sir.

6 Wow, we have the most districts to run  
7 through, so this is going to be a lightening  
8 round. Pay attention.

9 District 33, this is the waterfront  
10 district, northern Brooklyn -- Boerum Hill,  
11 Brooklyn Heights, Navy Yard, Dumbo, Fulton  
12 Ferry. It is the largest overpopulated  
13 district in the City, along with the west  
14 side. So, clearly they needed a lot of  
15 adjustments along 33. And there's an  
16 important population in Williamsburg, the  
17 Jewish community was kept intact there.

18 Next, District 34, coming around. This  
19 is the only Latino voting rights district in  
20 the borough. It was slightly underpopulated.  
21 It is a cross-borough, that little horn you  
22 see is actually going over the Queens line,  
23 and it has been that way for the last  
24 20 years, decades, and that minor adjustments  
25 were made.

1                   Coming in 35. I mean, 35 right here.  
2                   Very minor changes to the current district  
3                   boundaries of 35, and you could say similarly  
4                   for 36. And you'll hear more about these  
5                   Central Brooklyn districts and the Southeast  
6                   Queens when we hear from our expert,  
7                   Dr. Handley, a little later.

8                   Let's go to 37. This is another  
9                   district, was very underpopulated by over  
10                  9,000 people. It currently consists of  
11                  South Bushwick, Cypress Hills, parts of Ocean  
12                  Hill-Brownsville and Wyckoff Heights. No  
13                  major adjustments to 37.

14                  38 consists now of Red Hook, most of  
15                  Sunset Park and parts of Park Slope, Windsor  
16                  Terrace, Dyker Heights, and a small portion  
17                  of Bensonhurst.

18                  Next, District 39. Carroll Gardens,  
19                  Gowanus, Park Slope, parts of Windsor  
20                  Terrace, Kensington and Prospect Park. It  
21                  was slightly overpopulated and minor  
22                  adjustments were made.

23                  Next, District 40, covers Ditmas Park,  
24                  East Flatbush, Flatbush, parts of Lefferts  
25                  Gardens, and Prospect Park South. It was

1 severely underpopulated by 17,000 people, so  
2 a lot of adjustments had to be made to make  
3 that 40 come into compliance for population  
4 requirements.

5 Next, District 41, consists of mainly  
6 Ocean Hill, Brownsville, small parts of  
7 East Flatbush and Crown Heights. It was also  
8 underpopulated by almost 9,000 people, 41,  
9 and some minor adjustments around this  
10 bounder, therefore, had to be made.

11 Next, District 42. 42, mainly  
12 East New York, Brownsville. It was slightly  
13 underpopulated as well, over 4,000 people.  
14 Slightly, adjustments were made.

15 The next district after 42, 43. This  
16 is a newly-drawn councilmanic district there  
17 in South Brooklyn. It consists primarily of  
18 Sunset Park, parts of Dyker Heights and  
19 Bensonhurst. It is a new district created  
20 that research showed, and census, that  
21 there's a very large, new and growing, Asian  
22 American population in that area, and the  
23 Commission created a new district. You'll  
24 hear more, again, from Dr. Handley about that  
25 district.

1                   Next, District 44. 44 consists of  
2                   Borough Park, Midwood, Gravesend and  
3                   Mapleton. And it was expressed, a request to  
4                   try to unite the Borough Park and Midwood  
5                   portion -- major part of those neighborhoods  
6                   together in one district, 44.

7                   45 consists of Flatbush, East Flatbush,  
8                   Flatlands and a small part of Midwood. It  
9                   was severely underpopulated by over 15,000  
10                  people and, therefore, adjustments had to be  
11                  made along those borders to balance that  
12                  population for 45.

13                  Next, District 46. 45, 46. It  
14                  consists of Gerritsen Beach, Mill Basin,  
15                  Canarsie, Georgetown and parts of Flatlands.  
16                  It was slightly overpopulated by about 4,000  
17                  people, so along the borders, slightly,  
18                  adjustments were made for that 46.

19                  Next, District 47. 47 consists of Bay  
20                  Ridge, parts of Dyker Heights, Bath Beach,  
21                  Gravesend, Coney Island and Sea Gate. The  
22                  shape of this district results from the  
23                  creation of that 43. So, there was a small  
24                  corridor needed to unite these two  
25                  neighborhoods that expressed a request to be

1 united in one district, 47.

2 48 consists of Manhattan Beach,  
3 Brighton Beach, Sheepshead Bay and Midwood.  
4 This district was overpopulated by almost  
5 8,000 people. Therefore, 48, some slight  
6 adjustments along its borders were made to  
7 bring it into population compliance.

8 We're leading to our last wonderful  
9 borough, Staten Island.

10 Staten Island. 48, now we're going to  
11 49. 49 consists of -- that's the North Shore  
12 district -- Arlington, Clifton, Clove Lakes,  
13 Concord, Elm Park, Graniteville, Mariners  
14 Harbor and a number of other neighborhoods on  
15 that North Shore. It was slightly  
16 underpopulation, some minor adjustments were  
17 made to the 49th District proposed.

18 The Mid Island district, 50. And this,  
19 how you might want to describe it, a thumb,  
20 that is actually a piece of Brooklyn. The  
21 Mid Island is now connected by the Verrazano  
22 Bridge and takes in a small portion of  
23 Brooklyn, South Brooklyn on the other side of  
24 that bridge, to help pop -- balance the  
25 populations for the three Staten Island

1 districts.

2 And there were some changes along the  
3 Mid Island 50th degree -- I mean, district  
4 boundaries. And on the Brooklyn side, it  
5 takes in Fort Hamilton, that rectangle, Fort  
6 Hamilton Base, the VA Hospital, Dyker Beach  
7 Park and a few other blocks; that's the 50th.

8 And then, the last district is the  
9 51st, consisting of -- that's 51, South Shore  
10 district on Staten Island, Annadale, Arden  
11 Heights, Bay Terrace, Charleston, Great  
12 Kills, and a number of neighborhoods  
13 throughout that South Shore community. It  
14 was underpopulated by over 13,000. So,  
15 adjustments made across those three Staten  
16 Island districts, so that's all 51 districts  
17 throughout the City are in compliance with  
18 the new 5 percent state-mandated deviation.

19 And there are -- just a highlight very  
20 briefly. There are 29 majority/minority  
21 districts. That's more than half of the  
22 districts in the City of New York in this  
23 revised plan, and you'll get more details now  
24 on that last point.

25 Should I stop or hand off -- okay.

1 We'll hear from our next presenter after we  
2 hear from the Chair.

3 Thank you.

4 CHAIR WALCOTT: So, what I'd like to do  
5 with the Commissioners' permission is to call  
6 for a vote, and then we'll have Dr. Handley  
7 speak afterwards. And this is out of respect  
8 to our Commissioner, who has to take off. We  
9 want to make sure all votes are recorded.

10 And in addition to that, just to add to  
11 that part of the discussion, that when you do  
12 vote -- obviously, we always have our back  
13 and forth with each other, so as you vote,  
14 you can feel free to talk about your vote, if  
15 you still desire.

16 In addition to that, I just want the  
17 Commission to know how much I appreciate all  
18 the Commissioners, all the hard work, people  
19 who had to postpone vacations, people who  
20 were sick, the commitment, publications that  
21 we got out into 70 newspapers, multiple  
22 languages, over 9,600 responses.

23 We have been out in the community,  
24 people meeting individually and we have laid  
25 a foundation for the feedback that we

1 received to influence it. And the way  
2 Dr. Flateau laid it out, I wish it was that  
3 easy in our discussions because as we know,  
4 every change that is made has a domino effect  
5 on something else. And we have been very,  
6 hopefully, considerate. And where it needs  
7 to be adjusted, if the vote is passed, then  
8 that will be on City Council to either accept  
9 or put it back to us and then we'll have  
10 another round of public hearings and then  
11 move it from there.

12 I just want the Commission to know that  
13 I'm honored to be a part of this and honored  
14 that the Mayor asked me to join. And I think  
15 that we are well-served in serving the  
16 public.

17 And if there's a motion to entertain  
18 or --

19 COMMISSIONER UDDIN: So moved.

20 CHAIR WALCOTT: So moved.

21 Is there a second?

22 (No response).

23 CHAIR WALCOTT: Is there a second for  
24 the vote?

25 (Hand gestures).

1 CHAIR WALCOTT: Seconds around. And if  
2 the transcriber -- do you need the names as  
3 well, Counsel?

4 So, Maf is the originator of the motion  
5 and I saw Josh Schneps and I saw Kristen also  
6 second, so -- and Lisa Sorin.

7 COMMISSIONER PORCHER: And I second the  
8 motion.

9 CHAIR WALCOTT: I hear Dr. Porcher as  
10 well, so we have a number of seconds on the  
11 table.

12 Commissioner Schnall, knowing of your  
13 timeline and I think I see you up in the top  
14 corner, and I want to make sure I don't get  
15 accused of delaying you for other reasons,  
16 the floor is yours, sir, for your vote.

17 COMMISSIONER SCHNALL: Thank you, Chair  
18 Walcott. And I really, really appreciate the  
19 ability to vote now, so that I can catch my  
20 flight back, come back to the city that I  
21 love and see my family, see all of you. So,  
22 I just want to provide some quick context on  
23 my vote, and again, thank Chair Walcott for  
24 allowing me to speak for a few minutes.

25 Since the last vote in July, a lot has

1           happened. We've met in all five boroughs.  
2           We've hosted a lot of virtual participation.  
3           We've seen over 9,500 pieces of testimony.  
4           We've had meetings learning about racial bloc  
5           voting, hundreds of hours of mapping  
6           sessions, thousands of staff hours. We made  
7           every intention and effort to make -- to  
8           think about, deliberate and incorporate all  
9           the feedback we've received.

10                   It's an incredible amount of hard work  
11           and energy and dedication that went in, and I  
12           am so thankful for everyone's participation,  
13           the staff's hard work, the education I've  
14           gotten from this whole process and feel  
15           honored to be here. With that said, I wanted  
16           to make three quick points to explain my  
17           vote.

18                   First, I learned a long time ago that  
19           it's best -- it's often best to listen and  
20           rely on others with expertise when you don't  
21           have any, and so this applied to my work on  
22           the Commission. And I took the position that  
23           if I wasn't intimately familiar with a  
24           neighborhood, I would listen, observe but not  
25           inject my uninformed viewpoint. And what I

1 saw during this last round of mapping was a  
2 little unsettling and frankly unfair.

3 A few individuals undid some of the  
4 work of the many, often at the last minutes  
5 of a mapping session, which got finalized in  
6 these maps. Frankly, I think it's unfair to  
7 the countless members of the public who took  
8 time to testify and a little disrespectful to  
9 the work of our staff and fellow  
10 commissioners.

11 Second, process matters. Some lawyers  
12 will tell you that if you cannot argue  
13 substance, you argue process. And in this  
14 instance, I'm talking about both. But since  
15 July, most of our meetings have been held  
16 during the workday, short notice was given  
17 for some, and it made navigating the process  
18 and being present very difficult.

19 I know, including myself, we did  
20 everything we could to the best of our  
21 abilities to participate as much as possible,  
22 but it was very challenging and I know we  
23 could do better. But I know that we also  
24 can't let the perfect be the enemy of the  
25 good. So, I know that if we go further in

1 this process, we will do things better.

2 Third, and my last point is that the  
3 two boroughs with the most to lose in the  
4 second round of drafting did, the Bronx and  
5 Staten Island. So, for the record, I wholly  
6 oppose and oppose the dilution of Bronx  
7 political power with the change in the ratio  
8 of Council District 8, which now favors  
9 Manhattan. Rebalancing this district would  
10 have taken some really, really hard work, but  
11 I think it would have been worth the effort  
12 to better balance the district and restore  
13 the power that Bronx deserves.

14 And I know that I'm a broken record on  
15 this, and I resent the fact that Staten  
16 Island has been blamed for all the troubles  
17 identified in the first draft. The reality  
18 is that there are three things that cause  
19 more issues than anything else. A 5 percent  
20 deviation handed down from Albany without any  
21 challenge or pushback from the Law  
22 Department, a newly redrawn South Brooklyn  
23 district and intentionally underpopulated  
24 districts.

25 So, when it comes to vilifying Staten

1 Island, and there has been a lot of that  
2 recently, frankly it's cliché. I've heard it  
3 my entire life. I'm tired of it, and enough  
4 is enough. Staten Island deserves the same  
5 respect and chance at self-determination that  
6 the other boroughs enjoy.

7 And speaking of Staten Island, and most  
8 importantly why I am voting the way I am, I  
9 am adamantly opposed to the addition of  
10 approximately 16,000 people from Brooklyn to  
11 Council District 50. This move  
12 disenfranchises those 16,000 people, who  
13 deserve adequate and accessible  
14 representation. They will have to pay a \$20  
15 toll and drive 10 miles to see their council  
16 member. This is unfair, inequitable and  
17 completely avoidable.

18 This Brooklyn addition dilutes Staten  
19 Island's political power and sets the borough  
20 back ten years in the progress we've made to  
21 establish ourselves and chart our own future  
22 as a borough. So, as such, and as the only  
23 Staten Islander on this Commission and for  
24 all the reasons above, I vote no.

25 Thank you, Chair, for allowing me the

1 grace and privilege to voting right now, and  
2 I will see you back in New York.

3 CHAIR WALCOTT: Thank you, Commissioner  
4 Schnall. Have a safe flight. Look forward  
5 to seeing you back in New York.

6 And with that being said, I will call  
7 the roll and I will start, with the  
8 Commission's permission, with myself. And I  
9 will vote "Yes" for this plan. And in  
10 addition to what I heard the Commissioner  
11 say, Commissioner Schnall, I believe both in  
12 the substance and the process, and I think  
13 the substance and the process has been  
14 adhered to.

15 I think the number of community  
16 meetings, the input for the individuals as  
17 well as the dialogue back and forth,  
18 including Commissioner Schnall and others as  
19 far as the line-drawing with the mappers as  
20 well, has been extremely beneficial to the  
21 process.

22 And again, I think the challenge is  
23 making sure that we don't undermine all of  
24 the hard work and allow the process to unfold  
25 to the next step, because I think the

1 Commission has done an excellent job in  
2 meeting its responsibility and its due  
3 diligence and for that reason, I vote yes.

4 Commission Collado.

5 COMMISSIONER COLLADO: Thank you,  
6 Mr. Chair.

7 I wholeheartedly agree with those  
8 comments. First and foremost, I'd like to  
9 thank the staff, the Commission and everyone  
10 who has put in countless hours into these  
11 maps. Thank you. And most importantly the  
12 public, for their input, which was our  
13 guiding light in this process.

14 And with that, I vote yes.

15 CHAIR WALCOTT: Thank you,  
16 Commissioner.

17 Commissioner Go.

18 COMMISSIONER GO: Thank you, Chair,  
19 Chairman Walcott. I join in your -- in the  
20 praise that we've heard for the public  
21 because voting is such an important right to  
22 this country. And interestingly, I'm a judge  
23 by training and a lawyer by training, it's  
24 interesting that the Constitution never  
25 explicitly protects the right to vote, but

1 voting appears in the Constitution many  
2 times. And the concept of equity  
3 proportionality is so important to our life.  
4 We want to be fair and we want every vote to  
5 have the same weight.

6 So, I do feel Commissioner Schnall's  
7 pain about Staten Island. I think the people  
8 in Staten Island were wonderful. We were  
9 very impressed with them in coming up with  
10 the preliminary plans. But ultimately, the  
11 principle of one-person, one-vote, equity  
12 proportionality governs. And so, I do know  
13 that I have received some requests to delay  
14 the vote, and I share some of Commissioner  
15 Schnall's reservation about the process.

16 I wish people had had the chance to see  
17 these final maps that we are voting on.  
18 However, the maps were made after  
19 consideration of many comments, many hours of  
20 hearings, many consultations with the  
21 map-makers, and I really do thank the public.  
22 How many districting commissions can have the  
23 privilege of receiving over 9,000 comments?  
24 That is a credit to John Q. Public. Thank  
25 you. I applaud all of you who are here who

1 are not reporters. Thank you for bearing  
2 with us.

3 And that being said, and being so  
4 long-winded about it, I vote "yes" in  
5 favor -- even though I have no problems with  
6 delaying this vote to consider additional  
7 comments, I think the outreach has been  
8 fabulous. We've received wonderful  
9 responses, and there's just no reason for  
10 further delay and consideration by the City  
11 Council.

12 CHAIR WALCOTT: Thank you,  
13 Commissioner.

14 Commissioner Hanratty.

15 COMMISSIONER HANRATTY: Yes. First of  
16 all, I'd like to say that it's an honor to  
17 serve on this Commission. I feel privileged  
18 to be here. And I'd like to thank  
19 Chairman Walcott and all my fellow  
20 Commissioners and Dr. John Flateau and the  
21 entire staff for all the hard work they've  
22 put in.

23 However, at this time, I will be voting  
24 "no" on this proposal because of the --  
25 what's perceived to be the adverse effect on

1 certain communities of interest and certain  
2 competitive districts. So, my vote this time  
3 will be a "no." Thanks.

4 CHAIR WALCOTT: Thank you, Commissioner  
5 Hanratty.

6 Commissioner Mateo.

7 COMMISSIONER MATEO: Thank you.

8 Good morning, everyone. I would like  
9 to join in the comments of all the  
10 Commissioners, thanking the hard work, all  
11 the hours of the staff and especially the  
12 Commissioners who've been putting so many  
13 hours and a lot of work into making these  
14 maps come into fruition.

15 With that being said, there have  
16 been -- even though we have been making great  
17 strides as to making the districts much  
18 better, there have been a lot of public  
19 comments from my Dominican community,  
20 especially in some districts in Manhattan,  
21 specifically the second one and the seventh  
22 one.

23 And my Dominican community has grave  
24 concerns about the diluting of the Dominican  
25 vote. For those reasons and some others that

1 we will address in due time, I believe that  
2 there is still work to be done before we  
3 submit the maps to the City Council. So, I'm  
4 voting no.

5 CHAIR WALCOTT: Thank you, Commissioner  
6 Mateo.

7 Commissioner Schneps.

8 COMMISSIONER SCHNEPS: My vote is no,  
9 largely because this is an incredibly  
10 thorough process, and I would say that the  
11 amount of time that I spent on it, a lot, and  
12 that's nothing compared to the staff here.  
13 But just hearing some of the feedback here,  
14 just the end of the process has been really  
15 too quick for us to even hear each other's  
16 feedback for the final decision.

17 CHAIR WALCOTT: Thank you, Commissioner  
18 Schneps.

19 Commissioner Sorin.

20 COMMISSIONER SORIN: Okay. So, I'm  
21 going to echo, this has been a process like  
22 nothing other, and I've learned a lot. I  
23 will say that I want to move on to the next  
24 process. Selfishly, I'm going to be  
25 completely honest and say that what I don't

1 want is another huge round of public  
2 hearings. Because I think that among  
3 ourselves there's been so much debate, so  
4 much conversation.

5 We've listened to the testimony, but  
6 there's still a lot to be heard. There's  
7 still conversations among the Commission, and  
8 I need to hear more from the Hispanic  
9 community. So, for that reason, I vote no.

10 CHAIR WALCOTT: Thank you, Commissioner  
11 Sorin.

12 Commissioner Sullivan.

13 COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Thank you.

14 I want to just emphasize that the vote  
15 we are taking today is not to -- is not to  
16 approve this plan. As the draft letter of  
17 the Chairman to the Speaker of the City  
18 Council says, it is to present it to them for  
19 their conversation. So, this is not an  
20 approval of this plan. It is to take it to  
21 the next stage of the process.

22 So, it's for that reason that I  
23 believe, given all the hard work that has  
24 been done, I think it is time for us to hear  
25 from the City Council itself on this plan.

1 And if the City Council chooses to send it  
2 back to us for the additional work to deal  
3 with any of the -- any of the deficiencies or  
4 anything in the plan.

5 For that reason, I would -- I am voting  
6 that we do present this plan for the  
7 consideration of the City Council, as in  
8 Chairman Walcott's letter to the Speaker.

9 CHAIR WALCOTT: Thank you, Commissioner  
10 Sullivan.

11 Commissioner Wong.

12 COMMISSIONER WONG: Okay. Good  
13 morning, everybody. I'm such honor to be  
14 sitting there as Chair, as Commissioner.

15 First of all, my -- I have to thank all  
16 the people -- John and the team worked so  
17 hard and diligently. But I have some  
18 suggestions for the mapping working. Since I  
19 worked City, for City for 35 years, I know  
20 the zoning is so important. With New York,  
21 we have 58 zoning districts, but the district  
22 for the voting is 57. If all this zoning  
23 district is changing constantly and every day  
24 they're doing upgrade and downgrade, they're  
25 going to affect the population.

1           For example, Long Island City special  
2           district, before it's M1-1, the zoning is  
3           around that area, it's a manufacture zone.  
4           Today, you could see Long Island City, they  
5           have five different subdistricts for zoning,  
6           and they have constructed the building,  
7           60-story building, mixed-use building  
8           increase population certainly.

9           So, the zoning has also affected the  
10          population so quickly and we are -- maybe  
11          it's not falling so fast. We have ten years  
12          to redo the districting map, but the zoning  
13          map, they change constantly. So, somehow we  
14          have to link, incorporate with the zoning map  
15          and that there's some kind of synchronization  
16          to consider, the zoning map and districting  
17          map. That's my idea. Thanks.

18          CHAIR WALCOTT: And your vote is, sir?  
19          Your vote.

20          COMMISSIONER WONG: Temporarily, I say  
21          no.

22          CHAIR WALCOTT: No, okay. Thank you,  
23          Commissioner.

24          Next is Commissioner Uddin.

25          COMMISSIONER UDDIN: Yes. Good

1 morning, everybody. It is an honor that I  
2 sit with these distinguished people, we have  
3 worked very hard. I want to thank the staff,  
4 especially Dr. John Flateau, and Chair, you  
5 have been so kind.

6 I think the most important thank you  
7 deserve our community, over 9,000 people  
8 testified in different ways, in different  
9 format, twice in each borough, and the  
10 Commissioner was so kind. Everybody gave  
11 their time, thoughts and analysis and we  
12 arrived here.

13 I agree with the Commissioner that this  
14 is the process. We have preliminary maps on  
15 July 15th, we received feedback. We worked  
16 harder, and now September 22nd, we're going  
17 to send to the City Council. If City Council  
18 wants to do some of those legal things or do  
19 better, we have time to do it.

20 And that is why I am going to vote yes.

21 And with that, I want to thank you, everyone  
22 who is here, and just to let you know how  
23 proud I -- how honored I am because I think  
24 this is one of the commissions that I have  
25 seen in the last 38 years in this country,

1 most diverse, most intelligent, and most  
2 analytical. And so, I feel so proud that I  
3 am part of it.

4 Thank you very much.

5 CHAIR WALCOTT: Thank you,  
6 Commissioner.

7 Commissioner Johnson.

8 COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Hi, everyone.

9 So, I'll start off with my vote. My  
10 vote is a "yes," to the current iteration of  
11 the maps. And I want to echo the thanks to  
12 my fellow Commissioners, to the staff. I  
13 mean, it's clear a lot of work has gone into  
14 this, including the public's work, right?

15 And so, the one thing I will say is I  
16 think part of the hard work is, how do we  
17 reconcile all of the public comments, right?  
18 Into like -- there's conflicting testimony,  
19 right, every -- it's not all kumbaya in all  
20 the comments. So, how do we reconcile that  
21 with the reality of complying with the Voting  
22 Rights -- the Constitution, the Voting Rights  
23 Act, the City Charter?

24 And I believe this Commission has  
25 worked hard to do that, and so my vote is

1 yes, for the current iteration of the map.

2 CHAIR WALCOTT: Thank you,  
3 Commissioner.

4 Commissioner Kirschenbaum.

5 COMMISSIONER KIRSCHENBAUM: Good  
6 afternoon, everyone. It's just after noon.  
7 I want to echo a lot of the same sentiment  
8 that has been mentioned by my fellow  
9 Commissioners. I think the staff has worked  
10 extremely hard incorporating a lot of the  
11 feedback that we received from the public  
12 here, and I want to thank all of the public  
13 members who came out to the public hearings  
14 in person and submitted testimony  
15 electronically and via Zoom.

16 By no means do I think that this is the  
17 most perfect map in the history of the world,  
18 but I do think that we made a lot of progress  
19 and put a lot of time into this. And that  
20 time is now to send it to the next step,  
21 which is submitting it to the New York City  
22 Council.

23 If there is feedback for things that  
24 need to be tweaked, I think we're all happy  
25 to review that. But I vote yes in the moving

1 forward with this process. And I just want  
2 to echo again, thanking everybody for their  
3 hard work on this process.

4 CHAIR WALCOTT: Thank you,  
5 Commissioner.

6 Commissioner Porcher.

7 COMMISSIONER PORCHER: Thank you.

8 First, I want to say -- I want to give  
9 a special thank you to Chair Dennis Walcott.  
10 I think you did an amazing job dealing with a  
11 polarizing topic in connection with the  
12 redistricting of the City of New York.

13 Dr. Plateau (sic), your efforts were  
14 phenomenal in organizing one of the Herculean  
15 feats that's known to this city's history. I  
16 think we, as a Commission, did a great job in  
17 exchanging our ideas, especially in  
18 connection with the public hearings. Because  
19 on many instances, we may have had diametric  
20 opposition to specific topics. However, I  
21 believe that we coalesce behind the ultimate,  
22 and that was to support the democracy of the  
23 City of New York to ensure that the  
24 redistricting process was sound.

25 That being said, I had a number of

1 concerns, more so specific to Staten Island,  
2 Brooklyn -- Brooklyn South specifically and  
3 Manhattan, which I felt that there were some  
4 very challenging issues that were introduced,  
5 that I don't think we're fully satisfied in  
6 connection with the redistricting.

7 So, as a result of that, I'm voting no,  
8 and I'm hopeful that we can get to a point  
9 whereas we can all -- and I know it's not  
10 going to be 100, but eventually I believe  
11 that we can coalesce behind a strategy that  
12 supports the eight and three-quarter million  
13 residents of the City of New York, to ensure  
14 the voting process is sound moving forward.  
15 So, in synopsis, my vote is no.

16 CHAIR WALCOTT: Thank you, Commissioner  
17 Porcher.

18 Commissioner Wurzel.

19 COMMISSIONER WURZEL: Thank you,  
20 Mr. Chair.

21 I, too, would like to acknowledge the  
22 hard work and long hours that our staff, our  
23 map team from District R, our consultants,  
24 our volunteer commissioners have invested in  
25 this process to date. I'd also like to thank

1 the thousands of New Yorkers who testified  
2 and participated in this process.

3 I'd also like to thank, on behalf of  
4 the Commissioners and the staff, our families  
5 and as it applies to Commissioners, many of  
6 our employers, who have tolerated and  
7 supported us through this time-consuming  
8 process.

9 Unlike the preliminary plan, which I  
10 supported as a working draft, I cannot  
11 support the formal submission of this  
12 districting plan to the City Council because  
13 I don't think it meets an acceptable standard  
14 that addresses all of the criteria set forth  
15 in the Charter.

16 As Commissioner Schnall said in his  
17 opening remarks, there was a false narrative  
18 after we published the preliminary plan, that  
19 having three wholly contained districts in  
20 Staten Island was the root of each and every  
21 perceived problem with the preliminary plan.  
22 It's ironic that as soon as we -- as the  
23 Commission walked away from having three  
24 districts on Staten Island, more problems  
25 developed, some inevitable and some

1 self-inflicted.

2 There are several improvements in this  
3 current plan that Commissioners worked  
4 cooperatively to address. For example, this  
5 plan, as a preliminary plan, continues to  
6 meet and exceed voting and civil rights  
7 standards established by state, federal and  
8 local law, and by the courts. But there are  
9 a number of serious problems that still  
10 precludes me from endorsing this document.

11 Quite frankly, we just ran out of time  
12 because we're adhering to an aggressive  
13 schedule and deadline that we were forced to  
14 follow. We'd rather not meet a deadline or  
15 push that deadline to get something right  
16 rather than meet an arbitrary deadline with a  
17 less than satisfactory product.

18 As we began this process in the spring,  
19 and as we proceeded through it, we have been  
20 hamstrung by an unfortunate act by the  
21 governor and the legislature this fall, this  
22 past fall, to dust off a poorly drafted piece  
23 of legislation that has eviscerated the  
24 population variance that was approved by city  
25 voters and has been used to draw New York

1 Council districts for the past 30 years.

2 As a result, communities like the  
3 south -- south Brooklyn have been twisted  
4 into a mess because we have interjected a  
5 Staten Island appendage that was supposed to  
6 solve problems but somehow trigger more of  
7 them. We've shifted a South Bronx-dominated  
8 district that was connected to Manhattan, to  
9 now a Manhattan-dominated district that  
10 connects to Southwest Bronx. And we've  
11 twisted, divided and cannibalized several  
12 communities in a handful of competitive fair  
13 fight districts in Queens and Brooklyn,  
14 deeply concern me.

15 That is an important priority for me  
16 and has been ten and 20 years ago when I  
17 served on this very same Commission to draw  
18 balanced districts that support competitive  
19 elections. That's a basic tenet of good  
20 government. Every voter deserves a chance to  
21 elect the representatives of their choice,  
22 not just the voters who are enrolled in a  
23 certain political party and who can vote in a  
24 closed primary.

25 Election Day, not primary day, should

1 not determine who our elected representatives  
2 are, and that's the case in fair fight  
3 competitive districts that I have long sought  
4 in this city. So, I certainly plan to focus  
5 my energies to correct some of these issues  
6 when the City Council responds to this plan  
7 and we consider the modifications this fall.  
8 But I cannot lend my name to this document  
9 that we're proposing to submit to the City  
10 Council.

11 Finally, I cannot let this opportunity  
12 pass and not express my profound  
13 disappointment that confidential maps were  
14 shared with media outlets before they were  
15 adopted or even subjected to a vote by the  
16 Commissioners, and share -- and not shared  
17 with the public. A plan is not a plan until  
18 it is adopted and authorized by  
19 Commissioners.

20 I do not know who thought it was a good  
21 idea to share these intimate and confidential  
22 details of the maps hours and minutes after  
23 the mapping process concluded. I do not  
24 share an assessment. Consequently, I vote no  
25 on this plan.

1 CHAIR WALCOTT: Thank you, Commissioner  
2 Wurzel.

3 So, based on the vote, we will not be  
4 submitting these plans to the City Council.  
5 And then we will reconvene to discuss our  
6 next steps. And I want to thank the  
7 Commissioners, but also, I do want to take  
8 advantage, since we rearranged our schedule  
9 to accommodate Commissioner Schnall.

10 Dr. Handley, if you don't mind giving a  
11 brief presentation or I think it's important  
12 because you've put a lot of work into this,  
13 and I do not want to ignore all the hard work  
14 both from the Commissioners, the staff and  
15 those experts who've been part of this  
16 process.

17 DR. HANDLEY: Well, I was going to tell  
18 you that the plan that you drew passed Voting  
19 Rights Act muster, in my opinion. I'm not  
20 sure what's going to happen now, but let me  
21 tell you how I went about doing this.

22 I was retained by the Commission to do  
23 an analysis of voting patterns by race. This  
24 is required, essentially, by the Voting  
25 Rights Act if you have a significant minority

1 population. Here in New York, you have three  
2 significant -- I mean three protected  
3 minority populations that are significantly  
4 large enough to draw districts.

5 So, we're interested here in what the  
6 voting patterns of black voters, Hispanic  
7 voters and Asian voters are, relative to  
8 white voters. So, this is what I analyzed:  
9 It turns out the voting is polarized in New  
10 York City. It has been -- this shouldn't  
11 have been a surprise. It was ten years ago.  
12 It was 20 years ago. It was 30 years ago.  
13 It is still.

14 This is particularly true in democratic  
15 primaries, but the democratic primary is  
16 particularly important in New York City, so  
17 this is important. So, what this means is  
18 that you have to draw districts that comply  
19 with the Voting Rights Act.

20 First slide. I have some slides here.  
21 So, as I said, voting is polarized in  
22 New York City and you have to draw districts  
23 or if you already have them, you have to  
24 maintain them in a way that allows minority  
25 voters to elect their candidates of choice.

1 Now, this doesn't necessarily mean you  
2 draw majority/minority districts. An  
3 opportunity district is one that allows  
4 minorities to elect their candidates of  
5 choice, but it may be the case that they're  
6 only a plurality in the district and they get  
7 enough votes from, say, white voters or other  
8 minorities if you're talking, say, about a  
9 Hispanic district to elect the candidate of  
10 choice.

11 So, what I'm focusing on are districts  
12 with significant minority populations, that  
13 is, are -- is the minority a -- are blacks,  
14 Hispanics or Asians, a majority or a  
15 plurality in the district? And those are the  
16 districts that I focused on to determine how  
17 many opportunity districts you have in the  
18 current plan and how many you will have in  
19 any proposed plan that you put forward.

20 Okay. Next slide.

21 So, how do we do this? No elections  
22 have taken place under the district you've  
23 drawn, so we have to come up with some method  
24 just as if -- just as I use statistics to  
25 come up with a way of determining whether

1 voting was polarized. I'm going to use a  
2 method called recompiled election results to  
3 see if you have districts that will allow  
4 each of these minority groups to elect their  
5 candidates of choice.

6 We do this by looking at previous  
7 elections and we call these Bellwether  
8 elections, elections that were polarized  
9 previously and we want to see by recompiling  
10 the election results to the proposed  
11 districts if the minority-preferred candidate  
12 would carry these proposed districts. So,  
13 this is how we tell if you have maintained a  
14 minority district. And here is a list of the  
15 district, the elections that I looked at to  
16 determine if you had succeeded in drawing  
17 minority opportunity districts.

18 Now, each of these districts in general  
19 elections, black voters, Hispanic voters and  
20 usually Asian voters vote alike. But in  
21 democratic primaries, not necessarily so at  
22 all. So, each of these groups have to be  
23 considered separately and each of these  
24 districts have to be considered separately.

25 Next slide.

1           Okay. So, the first thing I did was,  
2           given that voting was polarized, identify how  
3           many districts currently could be called  
4           opportunity districts for each of these  
5           groups, and I did that by determining whether  
6           the minority-preferred candidate was being  
7           elected to City Council.

8           Next step was looking at the proposed  
9           districts and comparing the -- not just the  
10          demographic composition of these districts,  
11          but because we're supposed to be doing a  
12          district-specific functional analysis,  
13          looking at possible electoral outcomes. So,  
14          that's what I was going to do with each of  
15          the proposed districts.

16          Next slide.

17          So, I'm going to go through borough by  
18          borough. Here are the data, but let me just  
19          summarize and say -- so, in Manhattan, you  
20          had one district, District 9. And you can  
21          see the statistics for this, what it's in --  
22          what exists in the current plan and what the  
23          revised plan is. And this remains an  
24          effective district. That means it's an  
25          opportunity district for black voters.

1 Next slide.

2 You have two majority Hispanic  
3 districts that are going to remain effective,  
4 District 7 was a different story. It was a  
5 plurality Hispanic voting-age populations  
6 district. This was -- Hispanic voting-age  
7 population was decreased. The white  
8 population was increased, so now it's a  
9 plurality white district.

10 Now, the voting in this district was  
11 not polarized between Hispanics and whites.  
12 It was between Hispanics and black voters, I  
13 believe, but not between Hispanics and  
14 whites. The current representative was  
15 supported by both Hispanics and whites. And  
16 presumably, in the future, it's possible that  
17 a Hispanic can win with white support, but  
18 not with Hispanic support alone because it's  
19 no longer a plurality Hispanic district.

20 Next slide.

21 Okay. So, you have one majority black  
22 district in the Bronx and you maintained that  
23 district. It's as effective as it was in the  
24 currently plan.

25 Next slide.

1                   There are five majority Hispanic  
2                   districts, four of them elect  
3                   Hispanic-preferred candidates. The other one  
4                   is an opportunity district, but it elect a  
5                   black-preferred candidate. The -- you  
6                   increase the black -- the Hispanic VAP, so  
7                   it's going to trend towards a Hispanic  
8                   district. It is a minority opportunity  
9                   district, but not a Hispanic minority  
10                  opportunity district.

11                  Next slide.

12                  This is the data for that. Next slide.  
13                  So, you have two plurality Hispanic  
14                  districts, one of which is not an opportunity  
15                  district. It did not elect a  
16                  Hispanic-preferred candidate and the other  
17                  did, and that district did not change very  
18                  much. So, you have one plurality district  
19                  that's an opportunity district that remains  
20                  an opportunity district. And the other,  
21                  which was not and remains not an opportunity  
22                  district. Again, these -- this is not a  
23                  majority district. This is a plurality  
24                  district.

25                  Next slide.

1           In Queens, you have two majority black  
2           districts and they remain effective  
3           opportunity districts for black voters in the  
4           revised plan.

5           Next slide.

6           Then you have a plurality black  
7           district that was -- that you increase the  
8           black population and this will increase the  
9           effectiveness of that particular district,  
10          which was already an opportunity district.

11          Next slide.

12          You have one majority Hispanic  
13          district, which changed very little and will  
14          remain an Hispanic district in Queens.

15          Next slide.

16          So, there is one majority Asian  
17          district in the revised plan, as there was in  
18          the current plan and is equally effective in  
19          both plans. There were four plurality Asian  
20          districts, three of which were opportunity  
21          districts for Asian voters and remain  
22          opportunity districts. And the fourth of  
23          which, District 25, although it elects  
24          an Asian, turns out that's the Asian  
25          candidate of choice of white voters. Asian

1 voters supported a different Asian candidate,  
2 so that's not an opportunity district and it  
3 remains not an opportunity district in the  
4 revised plan.

5 Next slide. Next slide.

6 In Brooklyn, you have six majority  
7 black districts. They've all -- in the  
8 revised plan, as in the current plan, are  
9 effective or opportunity districts for black  
10 voters.

11 Next slide. Next slide.

12 You have one district that's a majority  
13 Hispanic district, District 37, that remains  
14 essentially the same and it is an effective  
15 Hispanic district.

16 Next slide.

17 So, you have -- you have created a  
18 new Asian district. It is an effective Asian  
19 district. You can tell by the votes for  
20 Yang, Andrew Yang, when he ran for mayor.  
21 District 38 was an Asian plurality district  
22 and the current plan is an Asian plurality  
23 district. Now, it was not electing the Asian  
24 candidate of choice. It was electing  
25 Hispanic candidate of choice. This was

1 traditionally a Hispanic district.

2 What the revised plan does, it  
3 maintains the same Hispanic percentage,  
4 decreases the Asian percentage and increases  
5 the white percentage. Now, the Hispanic  
6 incumbent won with Hispanic vote and white  
7 vote, so there's no reason to believe that  
8 the current incumbent wouldn't win this  
9 district. It was Asian voters who did not  
10 support this candidate. This district, Asian  
11 voters and Hispanic voters were quite  
12 polarized in this district.

13 Next slide.

14 In Staten Island, you maintained your  
15 majority/minority district with essentially  
16 the same black, Hispanic and Asian voting-age  
17 population.

18 And finally, my conclusion.

19 You have maintained the exact same  
20 numbers of black and Hispanic opportunity  
21 districts in the revised plan, as in the  
22 current plan, and you've increased the number  
23 of Asian districts, Asian opportunity  
24 districts, by one. And this, of course, is  
25 the fastest growing minority population and

1           it certainly -- I would say that you would  
2           have been successfully sued had you not done  
3           that, if somebody brought a suit, because it  
4           was possible to draw one and voting in that  
5           area was very polarized.

6                     And that concludes my comments on the  
7           revised plan.

8                     CHAIR WALCOTT: Thank you, Dr. Handley.  
9                     And questions for Dr. Handley?  
10                    Commission Wurzel.

11                    COMMISSIONER WURZEL: Dr. Handley,  
12           correct me if I'm wrong with this  
13           characterization: You're analysis, there  
14           are -- and I think John highlighted this in  
15           his presentation. There are 29 effective  
16           performing majority districts that were part  
17           of your detailed analysis, and one  
18           additional -- I guess for lack of a better  
19           way of describing it, we've used this  
20           description, a coalition district.

21                    Is that correct?

22                    DR. HANDLEY: Not exactly.

23                    COMMISSIONER WURZEL: So, please  
24           correct me.

25                    DR. HANDLEY: So, as I said, a majority

1 district isn't necessarily an opportunity  
2 district, and some plurality districts might  
3 be opportunity districts. Now, let me see if  
4 I can get the numbers. There are currently,  
5 let's see, 19 majority districts in which  
6 either black, Hispanic or Asians are a  
7 majority.

8 All of those are effective opportunity  
9 districts, except that one of these Hispanic  
10 majority, as I mentioned, is actually a black  
11 opportunity district. There are also a  
12 number of plurality districts, some of which  
13 are opportunity districts.

14 So, the numbers are a little -- the  
15 number shift. So, do you want to know about  
16 majority districts, plurality districts,  
17 opportunity districts?

18 COMMISSIONER WURZEL: No, I would --  
19 the point I'm trying to get to by asking this  
20 is that these are 29 districts, but I guess  
21 30 districts, that if they -- as we go back  
22 to the drawing board, if they're -- if we  
23 maintained the demographics of those  
24 districts, your analysis moves on to cover  
25 these districts as well?

1 DR. HANDLEY: Yes. Yes. I'm not sure  
2 about your numbers, but yes, that's correct.

3 COMMISSIONER WURZEL: Well, I just  
4 added up the numbers. I added up the  
5 districts --

6 DR. HANDLEY: Again, it's not just  
7 majority districts.

8 COMMISSIONER WURZEL: Well, I didn't --  
9 I'm talking about the combination of, you  
10 know, the majority performing, you know. I  
11 put everybody in the same, you know, set to,  
12 you know, ask my question, you know, if we --  
13 as we move forward, if we keep these  
14 districts, the demographics of these  
15 districts somewhat comparable to where they  
16 are now, they would meet the standards of  
17 voting rights, civil rights, local law and  
18 court findings about polarized voting.

19 DR. HANDLEY: With the caveat that it's  
20 not just the demographics. You're going to  
21 look at recompiled election results as well,  
22 because it has to be a functional analysis.  
23 But, yes. Yes.

24 COMMISSIONER WURZEL: Thank you.

25 CHAIR WALCOTT: So, to take

1 Commissioner Wurzel's question to a different  
2 level and also trying to tie together as far  
3 as next steps, we would still have to make  
4 sure that you are reviewing what we post and  
5 make sure that we're in compliance, no matter  
6 where those districts are, if there are any  
7 reconfiguration that meets a new need, as  
8 identified by other Commissioners, that role  
9 that you play is still extremely important as  
10 far as those next steps are concerned.

11 DR. HANDLEY: If these districts that  
12 I've identified as opportunity districts are  
13 modified, I would have to review them; that's  
14 correct.

15 CHAIR WALCOTT: Thank you very much.

16 Any other questions for Dr. Handley?

17 (No response).

18 CHAIR WALCOTT: So, for next steps,  
19 since we are not submitting this plan to the  
20 City Council, that means we'll be reconvening  
21 at some point.

22 Staff, we'll be getting back to all of  
23 you within 24 to 48 hours to set a date for  
24 the next meeting. And then, we will go  
25 through the process of addressing any of the

1 concerns because we still have a  
2 responsibility to submit these plans to the  
3 City Council for their review, as Commission  
4 Sullivan indicated. And if they have  
5 concerns around them, then they will get back  
6 to us with those concerns or they can pass on  
7 the maps once we do submit them.

8 Is that a correct way to articulate the  
9 next steps?

10 MS. PYUN: Yes.

11 CHAIR WALCOTT: Okay. Fine. So,  
12 you'll be hearing from staff shortly to find  
13 a mutually satisfactory date for all.

14 And if that is it, if there aren't any  
15 other questions, can I have a motion to  
16 adjourn?

17 COMMISSIONER UDDIN: So moved.

18 CHAIR WALCOTT: There's a motion to  
19 adjourn.

20 Is there a second?

21 COMMISSIONER SORIN: (Hand gesture).

22 COMMISSIONER MATEO: (Hand gesture).

23 COMMISSIONER COLLADO: (Hand gesture).

24 COMMISSIONER HANRATTY: (Hand gesture).

25 CHAIR WALCOTT: All in favor?

1 (Chorus of ayes.)

2 CHAIR WALCOTT: All opposed?

3 (No response).

4 CHAIR WALCOTT: And thank you for your  
5 time and your energy and your commitment as  
6 well.

7 (TIME ADJOURNED: 12:27 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF NEW YORK)

:SS

COUNTY OF QUEENS)

I, Sabrina Brown Stewart, a shorthand reporter within and for the State of New York, do hereby certify that the within is a true and accurate transcript of the statement taken on September 22, 2022.

I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or by marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 8th day of October 2022.

*Sabrina Brown Stewart*  
Sabrina Brown Stewart